

Message Text

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S E C R E T USUN 6982

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UN, XF

SUBJ: EGYPT OPPOSES STATIONING OF UNEF PATROL BOATS IN GULF
OF SUEZ.

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS GIVEN USUN BY UN OFFICIALS (URQUHART AND JONAH) ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT BE PASSED TO NO OTHER GOVERNMENT, SINCE UN BELIEVES THE BEST CHANCE OF RESOLVING THE PROBLEM LIES IN KEEPING IT FOR TIME BEING BETWEEN UNEF COMMAND AND EGYPTIANS. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES TO REPEAT THIS TELEGRAM TO CAIRO AND/OR TEL AVIV, WE ASK THAT THE ABOVE STRICTURE BE PASSED ON.

2. ACCORDING TO UN, ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO GENERAL MAGHOUB ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM GAMASY TOLD SIILASVUO THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT PERMIT UN PATROL BOATS IN GULF OF SUEZ. THEIR PRESENCE, HE SAID, WOULD INFRINGE EGYPTIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND WAS NOT ESSENTIAL TO UN SURVEILLANCE TASKS UNDER THE SINAI AGREEMENT. SIILASVUO REPORTED THIS TO UN. HE WAS IMMEDIATELY INSTRUCTED TO TELL EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT THAT UN NAVAL SURVEILLANCE FROM GULF OF SUEZ REPRESENTED A CRITICAL COMPROMISE AT GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS, ISRAELIS HAVING INITIALLY INSISTED ON MORE EXTENSIVE GROUND INSPECTIONS BY UN. SIILASVUO PASSED THIS ON TO MAGHOUB, AT THE SAME TIME MAKING AN APPOINTMENT TO CALL ON GAMASY DECEMBER 29. (NOW RESCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 30 BECAUSE OF JOINT COMMISSION

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MEETING ON 29TH.) LAST WEEKEND SIILASVUO REPORTED MAGHOUB

INFORMED HIM THAT GAMASY CONTINUED TO OPPOSE STATIONING OF PATROL BOATS IN GULF -- AND ADDED THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT PROVIDE UN WITH PORT FACILITIES. (THIS WAS PROBABLY ACADEMIC, OUR SOURCES BELIEVE, SINCE IRAN WOULD NOT SEND THE BOATS OVER EGYPTIAN OBJECTIONS.)

3. UN CONSIDERS THE DECEMBER 30 MEETING BETWEEN SIILASVUO AND GAMASY TO BE CRITICAL. IF EGYPTIANS INSIST ON THEIR POSITION, SYG BELIEVES HE WILL HAVE TO INFORM ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. (HIS AIDES SAY HE IS CONSIDERING OFFICIALLY NOTIFYING USG AT THAT POINT OR POSSIBLY PRIOR TO IT -- SOMETHING THAT MIGHT BE INFLUENCED THROUGH URQUHART IF DEPARTMENT SO INSTRUCTS US.) SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS REGARD EGYPT'S POSITION AS A QUANTUM JUMP IN RISK-TAKING IF IT PERSISTS. THEY BELIEVE RABIN WOULD PROBABLY CONSIDER RENEGING ON THE PATROL BOATS SERIOUS ENOUGH TO PUBLICIZE AS A MAJOR BREACH OF FAITH.

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